



Smiths Beach developers reveal optimistic timeline

by Usman Azad

AT THE earliest and most optimistic time frame, construction of the Smith Point development could begin in the middle of next year.

The new plans, which were released for public advertisement last Thursday, have a two-month public comment period.

The submissions will then be reviewed by the shire and by a Government working group.

If the plans are adopted by the council the plans will then be reviewed by the Western Australian Planning Commission, which will make a final decision on the development.

Consultant planner for Canal Rocks Michael Swift said in the best-case scenario the council could accept the plans over Christmas.

Mr Swift also felt that the plans would not have to be further reduced because they had already been reduced significantly from previous plans.

“If you keep reducing this then you run the risk of making the project unviable or making it a pimple on the side of the hill,” Mr Swift said.

The new plans have already met with disapproval from the Smiths Beach Action Group.

Chairman Bob McKay said the developers couldn't be trusted over the use of lobbyists Brian Burke and Julian Grill.

However, Canal Rocks chairman David McKenzie said the use of Mr Burke and Mr Grill had nothing to do with the actual plans.

Mr McKenzie said the current Development Guide Plan contained the views put to them during the public consultation meetings.

It also appeared that the Busselton shire had made a gaffe on the ABC the night before the plans were released for public comment.

A report on the 7.00pm news said the shire didn't believe the new plans would get public support.

The shire's director of lifestyle development Nigel Bancroft said “It was a controversial plan before and I still think it will be a controversial”.



Optimistic: Canal Rocks chairman David McKenzie says construction could begin by the middle of next year.

However, Mr Bancroft said his comments had been taken out of context.

He said he never said that the plan wouldn't get public support.

“All I said was that it was a controversial plan before and it will be a controversial plan this time,” he said.

“I think this is the most obvious comment that anyone could make.”